

**Request for Qualification
College and Career Readiness and Planning**

COVER SHEET

Organization Information:

Organization name: College Access Now

Organization address: PO Box 22999, Seattle, WA 98122

Describe your legal status and, if applicable, state of incorporation (for example, Washington State non-profit corporation, Washington State partnership, sole proprietorship):

Washington State non-profit corporation

Application Components and Checklist (submit in this order)

- ☒ Cover Sheet
- ☒ Key People
- ☒ Previous Experience
- ☒ Tracking to Success
- ☒ Women and Minority Inclusion; Non-discrimination

Contact Information:

Contact person: Christine Mosere

(please print clearly)

Title: Development Director

Mailing address: PO Box 22999, Seattle, WA 98122

Day/Work phone: 206-992-6761

Email address: c.mosere@collegeaccessnow.org



Signature:

Date: February 13, 2012



I. Key People: CAN's work is overseen by the executive director, Christine Martin, and an active eleven-member board of directors who participate in monthly meetings and an annual retreat to align organizational and program direction, its operations, the needs it serves, and the ways the organization measures its success. CAN employs six full time and one part time exempt staff members and supports nine full-time AmeriCorps service members.

Selected Staff Bios:

Jennie Flaming, Program Director: Jennie has been with CAN for over 5 years. She oversees all aspects of the CAN program; including recruiting, training, and supporting the service of AmeriCorps members. Jennie came to CAN in its second year and her leadership has brought CAN's mission of making college possible for talented, motivated and disadvantaged students to 346 students. Jennie took CAN through significant growth—from leading/managing two AmeriCorps members in one high school in her first year, to leading nine AmeriCorps members in three high schools in 2011-12. Jennie holds a M.Ed. in Guidance and Counseling from the University of Alaska Fairbanks and a B.A. from the University of Washington.

Frank Wagner, Gretchen Wilkinson, and Andrea Won, Site/Program Supervisors:

Oversee all aspects of the CAN program in their assigned school(s); serve as lead student advisor and support AmeriCorps members; oversee student caseload management at their assigned school. **Frank Wagner (Franklin & West Seattle High Schools)** originally joined CAN in August of 2007, serving as an AmeriCorps member at Franklin High School. In the Fall of 2009, he began working as Program Supervisor during CAN's first year at West Seattle High School. He holds a B.A. in History from Winona State University (Winona, MN). **Gretchen Wilkinson (Garfield High School)** is a retired Language Arts Teacher, Dean of Students, and Academic Intervention Specialist at Garfield High School. She joined CAN in 2011 and holds a B.A. from Syracuse University and earned a Masters from Danforth Leadership Program in Education at the University of Washington in 2005. **Andrea Won (additional schools TDB)** served as an AmeriCorps member with CAN at West Seattle High School from 2009-2011. Andrea graduated from the University of Colorado with a BS in Engineering. She decided that she wanted to make more of a direct impact on disadvantaged student's lives and made the leap from engineering to education.

Jennie Flaming will lead our project to its results. Jennie has project managed all aspects of the CAN program for the past five years and has a strong track record of success. In addition to the information found in her bio above, Jennie has always been a strong advocate for low-income, first generation students and formed our college persistence program upon seeing the need for further student support. Under Jennie's direction, CAN started to contact school coaches (as well as counselors and teachers) to make sure that ALL students were/are aware that college was/is an option.

II. Previous Experience:

Target Community: CAN focuses on helping underserved populations who need extra help navigating the college application and financial aid processes. CAN has built a strong reputation for helping low-income high school students earn admission to college—**many of whom do not seek help on their own**. Our staff actively recruits high school juniors and seniors who have a minimum grade point average of 2.0, are the first generation in their families to attend college, and come from families that have low incomes. **While CAN does not have a criterion related to race or ethnicity, more than 97% of students served in the organization's first six years are students of color and 57% speak a language other than English at home.** Potential participants are referred by teachers, counselors, sports coaches, and/or approach CAN staff following classroom presentations. CAN begins in a student's junior year as that is when college becomes tangible and real to students and still gives CAN time to make a difference. CAN does not directly serve students in ninth and tenth grades, yet actively works and partners with other organizations within the high schools, and the communities we serve, to create a pipeline for services from ninth to twelfth grade.

CAN was founded on the fundamental beliefs that 1) many low-income high school students lack the resources to compete effectively for admission to colleges and universities and 2) colleges and universities are very interested in admitting students from low-income backgrounds, but have difficulty identifying and attracting them. With Seattle high school counselor case loads at 400:1 and a recent report from the *National Association for College Admission Counseling* showing that an average high school student receives only 38 minutes of college guidance each year, **many students are falling through the cracks around the college application process—especially those who need the support most (low-income, minority, and immigrant families) as they do not have as much access to outside resources or family knowledge.**

Through our intensive assistance in the college selection and admission process, including research-proven college admissions curriculum, support for obtaining financial aid, and preparation for standardized college entrance exams, **we are proud to report that 100% of our 379 students served received college acceptance and over 91% enrolled in college.** In the past two school years:

- All 217 high school seniors received college acceptance as well as financial aid and transition planning to make attendance possible. 100% were low-income and 94% were people of color; 25% had between a 2.0 and 2.49 grade point average (GPA) and 44% had between 2.5 and 3.0 GPA.
- Over \$5M was awarded to CAN students in independent and institutional scholarships; The CAN class of 2011 included a Gates Millennium Scholarship winner.
- CAN expanded to West Seattle High School (now serving three Seattle public schools). All 30 seniors received college acceptance - proving that our program was scalable.
- 80% of CAN alumni are still enrolled in or have become college graduates including Ethiopia Berta, Garfield '08, who is now teaching through *Teach for America*!

- In 2010/11, we had our first *Bowdoin Bound East Coast College Tour*.
- The CAN High School Class of 2012 consists of 154 seniors and over 150 juniors. As of February 1st, 98% of CAN high school seniors completed their federal financial aid application, 97% applied to at least one college and 50% received acceptance letters.

Success story (one of many): Wilondja Muyoma, a CAN student, escaped a war torn area of Africa, was found in a refugee camp by a social worker and brought to America in his sophomore year. With little understanding of English, he registered at Franklin HS joined CAN. In February of 2012, he received an ACT Six Leadership Scholarship for Whitman College. He credits CAN with advising him about the scholarship, introducing him to the Whitman campus, and walking him through the entire process.

Our College Persistence Program: In 2010, CAN reviewed some startling statistics. The data revealed that low-income students who are the first-generation-to-attend-college are four times more likely to leave college after the first year than their more affluent peers. In answer, CAN formed a college persistence focus that includes (1) targeted direct outreach to students; (2) bidirectional connections to on-campus resources so the colleges know about the students as well as the students knowing about the resources; and (3) enhanced relationship building with targeted colleges where multiple CAN students attend. CAN's initial college persistence pilot paid off big in our first year. Our partnership with St. Martin's University in Olympia, where 10 CAN students currently attend, yielded a new "CAN Scholarship" to be given to five CAN students per year to cover the gap between standard financial aid awarded and the total dollars needed for a student to attend school. We are currently working with other colleges to gain additional CAN scholarships.

Direct Service Delivery: CAN's operates somewhat differently from many programs with a similar mission: 1) Our program includes a low ratio of students to adults. 2) **We work at the school sites four days a week** during and after the school day, to maximize students' access to resources. 3) We intentionally seek to enhance the college-going cultures across the school. 4) We support students of all academic backgrounds changing both who attends college and which colleges they attend.

CAN works with students and families to make sure they are taking all the required high school classes for graduation and our staff has a 'whatever it takes' attitude and helps students register and pay for online courses if they do not have enough 'college-ready' courses on their academic plan.

Partnering with Schools and other organizations to achieve results:

CAN collaborates with counselors and other staff and with similarly focused organizations within the schools (CitiYear, Read Right, and the YMCA). CAN works to increase the college-going culture of the schools it serves through participation in school-wide financial aid forums and PTSA college nights, indirectly supporting a larger school community that includes a total of 4,000 students. CAN is intentional about avoiding duplication of efforts by partnering with programs whose efforts are complementary to ours within schools; offering joint events, such as campus visits.

Contact information of organizations that worked with CAN: Funders: College Spark: Heather Gingerich, Heather@collegespark.org; Fordham Street Foundation: Judy Bigelow, judy@fordhamstreet.org • **School Staff:** Franklin: Dr. Jennifer Wiley, jwiley@seattleschools.org; Garfield: Ken Courtney (Head Counselor, kcourtney@seattleschools.org); West Seattle: Marcia Berenter, Head Counselor, mberenter@seattleschools.org. • **Community-based Organizations:** YMCA: Anne Powell, Program Director, ampowell@seattleschools.org; CitiYear: Simon Amiel, ED, samiel@cityyear.org; Read Right: Mallory Clarke, maclarke@seattleschools.org;

Challenges and Barriers low-income, minority, ‘first-generation’ students face:

The major barrier to college enrollment among qualified low-income students is lack of information about admission requirements, procedures, and financial aid. Our program successfully addresses that barrier. Additional challenges include:

a) *Students have a critical need for continued support once enrolled in college.* A recent study by the U.S. Department of Education found that family income was a much greater predictor of college completion than academic performance. Nationally, only 18% of these students earn a bachelors degree after six years. In response, we are investing more in college persistence AND are incorporating additional components of individual choice and ownership into our high school program. One example is the addition of a peer mentoring portion to our program that builds leadership qualities in our high school seniors, further preparing them to drive their college educational experience. The CAN Peer Outreach Program (CANPOP) pairs senior mentors with 1-3 junior mentees. Peer mentors are responsible for checking in with their mentees on a weekly basis to offer encouragement, support, and to help keep students focused on the goal of attending college. They draw on their own experiences to engage students and provide meaningful support for their peers.

b) *Students cannot always access the required courses within their public high schools to graduate “College ready”.* CAN has a *gung ho* approach and helps students register and pay for online courses to ensure they graduate ‘college-ready.’

c) *The most significant barriers to the success of our students center around financing their college investment.* There is a constant rise in college tuition while available college funding for low income students often decreases. CAN continues efforts to address the impacts of budget shortfalls via direct work with particular colleges, assisting students to find funding sources, and educating our board and community volunteers about the impacts of funding. One example of our work is the above referenced partnership with St. Martin’s University where we secured a ‘CAN scholarship’ for five CAN students per year. CAN has updated our spring curriculum for seniors to include an enhanced financial component as well as adding visits to the campuses they plan to attend once accepted—allowing them to meet relevant human resources in person and familiarize themselves with campus resources and opportunities prior to the start of school. CAN is working with SPS’s to ensure that all the students signed up for College Bound scholarships (CBS) are able to take advantage of the funding.

III. Tracking to Success:

Evidence Based: In our seventh year, CAN has plenty of data to show that our program works. From the first 29 students to the 127 graduating seniors in 2011 - every single student (379 total) in every year has received acceptance to college

CAN's Target Metrics: CAN measures its effectiveness primarily against its programmatic goals.

≥ 95% apply to at least one college (**actual: 100% seniors for 6 years**)

≥ 90% college acceptance (**actual: 100% of seniors for 6 years**)

≥ 90% eligible students will file the FAFSA (**actual: 100% eligible seniors for 6 years**)

≥ 70% will apply for at least one independent scholarship (**actual 78% for 6 years**)

≥ 70% of CAN graduates will still be enrolled in college after two years (**actual 80%**)

Objectives and Milestones: High School Seniors: Students will complete at least one college application, a financial aid application, and at least one scholarship application, choose a school to attend, and develop a financial plan to pay for their education—by the end of their senior year. High School Juniors: CAN's students will visit at least one campus, take or register for standardized tests, complete a draft campus list and draft personal statement and resume—by the end of their junior year. College Students: CAN's students will complete their FAFSA each year, meet or talk with CAN staff at least once, and stay enrolled in college after completing each semester/trimester.

Outcomes: Over the next five years, CAN will help between 800 and 1,200 students graduate from high school *college ready*, gain college acceptance, and have a plan in place for transitioning to college. At least 85% accepted to college will enroll within a year, and at least 70% of those enrolled will remain in or have received college degrees.

Improving Student Outcomes: CAN gathers output/process data, including campus list preparation, summer program participation, resume completion, and weekly group session attendance. CAN staff use these data to help inform program decisions, aimed at increasing program effectiveness. In addition, CAN uses the National Student Clearinghouse, along with various types of personal contacts (in person, phone, email, facebook) to track students' performance in college and progress toward graduation. We use this data to help us make decisions regarding curriculum changes to increase program effectiveness. Example: In 2010, when CAN staff observed from group attendance data that there was a dramatic drop in attendance in the spring of senior year, a critical time in preparing students for college, staff modified the program to include more small groups of students attending particular colleges and individual counseling to sort out financial aid and related planning issues. The following year, we saw a marked increase in spring attendance. We also monitor academic progress to make sure our students are on track for high school graduation and college attendance.

IV. Woman and Minority Inclusion; Non-discrimination: CAN may need to hire additional AmeriCorps members and Site Supervisors depending on number of schools served. CAN is an Equal Opportunity Employer that does not discriminate on the basis of national origin, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, socioeconomic status, marital status, language, disability, or immigration status, or any other basis.

DATA SHEET

STATS FOR HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS	ALL Totals 2010	ALL Totals 2011	Garfield HS 2010	Garfield HS 2011	Franklin HS 2010	Franklin HS 2011	West Seattle 2011
Total students	65	127	33	38	32	60	29
Percent accepted to college	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Percent attending 4-year college (rest attending 2-year)	65%	67%	70%	71%	59%	55%	79%
Percent completing FAFSA	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total Institutional & Independent Scholarship \$\$	\$1,561,426	\$3,694,000	\$860,466	\$1,681,685	\$700,960	\$994,884	\$1,116,930
Percent who applied to 1 or more colleges	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Percent who applied for 1 or more independent scholarship	80%	79%	100%	76%	59%	83%	96%
GPA <2.0	6%	5%	2%	3%	10%	4%	3%
GPA 2.0-2.49	24%	17%	18%	24%	30%	22%	3%
GPA 2.5-2.99	13%	17%	16%	13%	14%	22%	21%
GPA 3.0-3.49	20%	21%	24%	18%	10%	22%	21%
GPA 3.5-4.0	38%	40%	40%	42%	35%	30%	52%
First Generation in Family to Attend College	86%	96%	90%	97%	84%	98%	100%
Participating in Free/Reduced Lunch Prog.	87%	88%	100%	87%	71%	82%	97%

Due to rounding total GPA figures may not add up to 100%

*CAN CLASS of 2012
(three-school totals)*

Race/Ethnicity

African American or African Immigrant: 40%
Asian American or Asian Immigrant: 34%
Caucasian: 1%
Latina/Latino: 5%
Multi-racial: 12%

(Note: 8% did not report Race/Ethnicity)

Gender:

Male: 35%
Female: 62%
Other/not reported: 3%